

## Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A DNA construct for stably transforming the plastids of higher plants, comprising:

a) a transcription unit encoding at least one exogenous protein of interest; and

b) a NEP promoter and a PEP promoter in tandem, operably linked to said transcription unit, wherein expression of said transcription unit is regulated by said promoters,

wherein said NEP promoter is the NEP promoter from a gene selected from the group consisting of *clpP*, *rpoB*, and *atpB*, wherein said *atpB* gene is from a plant selected from the group consisting of maize, sorghum, barley, wheat, ~~tobacco~~, and rice, wherein said *rpoB* gene is selected from the group consisting of maize, and rice, ~~tobacco~~, and ~~barley~~, and wherein said *clpP* gene is from a plant selected from the group consisting of maize, rice, ~~tobacco~~, ~~barley~~, and wheat; and

wherein said PEP promoter is *Prn* or is the *clpP* PEP promoter from ~~a gene selected from the group consisting of rice *rbcL*, maize *rbcL*, maize *atpB*, *clpP*, and barley 16S rDNA.~~

Claim 6 (Currently amended): A ~~The~~ DNA construct for stably transforming the plastids of higher plants, comprising:

a) a transcription unit encoding at least one exogenous protein of interest; and

b) a NEP promoter and a PEP promoter in tandem, operably linked to said transcription unit, wherein expression of said transcription unit is regulated by said promoters, ~~according to claim 5~~, wherein said NEP promoter is *clpP*-111 and said PEP promoter is *Prn*.

Claim 7 (Currently amended): A ~~The~~ DNA construct for stably transforming the plastids of higher plants, comprising:

a) a transcription unit encoding at least one exogenous

protein of interest; and

b) a NEP promoter and a PEP promoter in tandem, operably linked to said transcription unit, wherein expression of said transcription unit is regulated by said promoters, ~~according to claim 5,~~ wherein said NEP promoter is clpP-53 and said PEP promoter is Prn.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The DNA construct according to claim 6, wherein said Prn has the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 32.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The DNA construct according to claim 7, wherein said Prn has the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 32.

Claim 10 (Cancelled)

Claim 11 (Cancelled)